

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6538

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, NATO, SP

SUBJECT: SPAIN AND NATO

1. DURING A COURTESY CALL AUGUST 26 ON THE NEW UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS MIGUEL SOLANO (WHO RETURNED PERMANENTLY TO MADRID FROM HIS POST IN GENEVA TWO WEEKS AGO) WE DISCUSSED BRIEFLY SPANISH ATTITUDE TOWARD NATO. I HAD MENTIONED TO HIM THAT I HAD PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER OREJA CERTAIN STEPS WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN OVER THE SHORT TERM FOR A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPAIN AND NATO. I INQUIRED WHETHER HE HAD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH OREJA. UNDER SECRETARY SAID HE HAD NOT, BUT POINTED OUT THAT DURING MUCH OF THE TIME THAT HE HAS BEEN IN MADRID, OREJA HAS BEEN EITHER TRAVELING OR IN SAN SEBASTIAN.

2. SOLANO THEN EXPRESSED HIS OWN VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FROM THE SPANISH POINT OF VIEW TO PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY WITH REGARD TO CLOSER SPANISH
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ASSOCIATION WITH NATO, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE IT IS

BY NO MEANS CLEAR THAT THE SPANISH MILITARY ARE
PERSUADED THAT SPANISH ENTRY INTO NATO IS DESIRABLE.
HE THOUGHT THAT, IN SPITE OF OPPOSITION TO SPAIN'S
ENTERING THE COMMON MARKET BY CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL
SECTORS, THE EC ENJOYED A BETTER IMAGE IN SPAIN
THAN DID NATO. THUS IT WOULD BE EASIER FOR SPAIN
TO ACCEPT INTERGRATION INTO THE COMMUNITY THAN INTO
NATO.

3. SOLANO INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE QUESTION
OF SPANISH RELATIONSHIP TO NATO HAD TO BE CAREFULLY
STUDIED AND IT WAS DESIRABLE TO MAINTAIN A DIALOGUE
ON THE QUESTION. IN THIS RESPECT HE SAID THAT THE
GOVERNMENT WOULD SOON HAVE TO APPOINT NOT ONLY A
NEW AMBASSADOR IN BRUSSELS, BUT A NEW DCM. IT WAS
HIS VIEW THAT BOTH THESE MEN SHOULD HAVE SOME
POLITICAL-MILITARY BACKGROUND, AND HE WAS STUDYING
POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR THESE POSITIONS IN THAT
CONTEXT. HE BELIEVED IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT SPANISH
REPRESENTATION IN BRUSSELS HAVE THE CAPACITY AND
BACKGROUND FOR DIALOGUE WITH NATO IN ORDER TO
ASSIST SPANISH GOVERNMENT IN ARRIVING AT A
CONCLUSION ON THIS OVERALL QUESTION.

4. I TOLD SOLANO THAT WE HAD NO DESIRE TO PRESS
THIS ISSUE ANY FASTER THAN THE TRAFFIC WOULD BEAR
AND THAT OUR SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING STEPS FOR THE
SHORT TERM WERE CONSISTENT WITH THE NEGOTIATING
HISTORY OF THE TREATY AND WITH THE LANGUAGE OF
THE TREATY ITSELF. I ALSO POINTED OUT TO HIM
THE WILLINGNESS OF GENERAL HAIG AND HIS STAFF
TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR
AND HIS STAFF IN BRUSSELS.
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